



6 MONTH VIRTUAL DIETETICS SKILL AND CLINICAL REASONING COURSE

Foundation to Advanced Nutrition Care Process

A structured course for nutrition and dietetics students, as well as graduates who want to strengthen concepts that may have been missed during their academic development. The course begins with the science of nutrition, develops evidence based thinking and professional confidence, and then progresses into advanced clinical reasoning, ADIME and IDNT terminology.

Who this course is for

Nutrition and dietetics students who want to skill themselves during their degree, and graduates who want to rebuild weak or missed concepts before moving into stronger clinical practice.

Core purpose

To develop individuals who understand nutrition science, question misinformation, think critically, communicate professionally and make nutrition decisions from evidence rather than imitation.

Clinical progression

Advanced Nutrition Care Process, ADIME and IDNT are intentionally introduced later, after the participant has developed the scientific and reasoning foundation needed to understand them properly.

Final direction

The participant should finish the course with a clear professional identity, stronger clinical reasoning and the ability to work through nutrition cases using a structured clinical process.



Course Roadmap

Month	Development Focus	What Changes for the Participant
1	Understand Nutrition Science	Moves from food rules and scattered facts to understanding the science behind nutrition.
2	Question Nutrition Information	Moves from repeating claims to evaluating evidence, context and misinformation critically.
3	Build Professional Identity	Understands what makes dietetics a profession and develops confidence grounded in competence.
4	Develop Clinical Reasoning	Learns to look at the whole patient, identify what matters, identify what is missing and avoid disease based shortcuts.
5	Master Advanced NCP, ADIME and IDNT	Learns the professional clinical language after the scientific and reasoning foundation is strong.
6	Apply Through Cases	Uses the complete process in realistic cases and learns to defend each decision with clinical rationale.



MONTH 1: UNDERSTAND WHAT NUTRITION ACTUALLY IS

Theme: Build the science before building the dietitian.

Purpose: To rebuild foundational concepts so nutrition is understood as a science rather than a collection of food rules.

Week	Focus	Learning Content	Learning Activity
1	Nutrition Beyond Healthy and Unhealthy Foods	Meaning of nutrition. Food and nutrients. Macronutrients and micronutrients. Energy. Digestion. Absorption. Metabolism. Nutrient utilization and storage. Nutrient requirements. Deficiency, insufficiency and excess. Individual variation in nutritional needs.	Create a concept map connecting food, nutrients, body processes and health outcomes. Discuss why nutrition cannot be reduced to good food and bad food labels.
2	Understanding Macronutrients Properly	Carbohydrates, protein and dietary fat through physiology. Digestion, absorption, metabolic roles, fiber, glycemic response, amino acids, protein quality, essential fatty acids and cholesterol.	Analyze common claims such as carbohydrates make you fat and explain why the statement is scientifically incomplete rather than simply calling it true or false.
3	Micronutrients Without Supplement Culture	Vitamins and minerals. Food sources. Absorption. Bioavailability. Nutrient interactions. Deficiency development. Food first principles. Supplementation basics. Why a symptom does not automatically identify a nutrient deficiency.	Work through examples such as fatigue, hair fall and low hemoglobin and identify what additional information is required before reaching a conclusion.
4	Energy, Weight and Metabolism	Energy intake and expenditure. Basal energy needs. Physical activity. Thermic effect of food. Weight gain and weight loss. Body composition. BMI and its limitations. Metabolic adaptation. Multifactorial influences on weight.	Explain why one food cannot determine body weight or metabolic health and identify the multiple factors that need to be assessed.

Development Outcome: Students move from memorizing food facts to understanding the science that supports nutrition decisions.

MONTH 2: LEARN HOW TO QUESTION NUTRITION INFORMATION

Theme: Stop borrowing opinions. Start evaluating evidence.

Purpose: To build the ability to judge nutrition information before accepting, repeating or applying it.

Week	Focus	Learning Content	Learning Activity
5	What Evidence Based Nutrition Means	Scientific evidence, clinical expertise and patient context. Research evidence, expert opinion, personal experience, testimonials and anecdotes. Introduction to guidelines, systematic reviews, meta analyses, randomized trials, observational research and case reports.	Compare different sources supporting the same nutrition claim and discuss which deserve more confidence and why.
6	How Nutrition Misinformation Is Created	Cherry picking research. Using one study as proof. Fear based nutrition language. Overgeneralization. Food demonization. Supplement marketing. Before and after claims. Celebrity authority. Appeal to nature. Misuse of biochemical mechanisms.	Break down one viral nutrition claim into the claim being made, evidence being shown, evidence that is missing and language being used to persuade.
7	Critical Thinking Toolkit	Defining a claim clearly. Evidence quality. Study population and generalizability. Association and causation. Alternative explanations. Effect size. Missing information. Limits of conclusions. Avoiding recommendations that go beyond the evidence.	Use a standard critical thinking framework to evaluate a claim and explain the conclusion in professional language.
8	Nutrition Myth Laboratory	Critical review of common claims around carbohydrates, sugar, gluten, dairy, seed oils, detox diets, intermittent fasting, hormone balancing diets, supplements, superfoods and gut health.	Select one claim, review stronger evidence, identify uncertainty and present a balanced evidence based explanation.

Development Outcome: Students stop accepting confident claims automatically and begin asking what the evidence actually supports.



MONTH 3: BUILD THE IDENTITY OF A DIETITIAN

Theme: You are not just someone who makes meal plans.

Purpose: To help students understand the value of their professional education and build confidence that is grounded in competence.

Week	Focus	Learning Content	Learning Activity
9	Connecting the Degree to Professional Practice	How anatomy, physiology, biochemistry, food science, nutritional sciences, clinical nutrition, research, counseling and public health connect with each other in dietetic decision making.	Create a professional knowledge map showing how university subjects contribute to understanding and managing nutrition problems.
10	What a Dietitian Actually Does	Dietetics as a profession. General nutrition education and Medical Nutrition Therapy. Scope of practice. Professional boundaries. Working within competence. Referral. Multidisciplinary care. Ethics and confidentiality.	Work through professional scenarios and decide what can be managed by a dietitian, what needs referral and what requires collaboration.
11	Clinical and Professional Communication	Patient friendly explanations. Professional terminology. Avoiding absolute and fear based statements. Communicating uncertainty. Explaining evidence. Communicating with other healthcare professionals.	Rewrite common nutrition statements into language that is evidence informed, respectful and professionally defensible.
12	Developing Professional Confidence	Competence based confidence. Fear of asking questions. Learning to say I do not know. Comparing oneself with social media personalities. Learning from seniors without copying blindly. Identifying skill gaps. Continuing professional development.	Develop a personal learning plan identifying strengths, current gaps and skills that need deliberate practice.

Development Outcome: Students understand what makes their professional training valuable and begin developing a clear evidence based professional identity.

MONTH 4: LEARN HOW A DIETITIAN THINKS ABOUT A PATIENT

Theme: Clinical reasoning before clinical terminology.

Purpose: To teach students how to interpret a patient as a whole person before introducing advanced standardized NCP language.

Week	Focus	Learning Content	Learning Activity
13	Understanding the Whole Patient	A medical diagnosis is only one part of the case. Food habits, culture, symptoms, medications, lifestyle, knowledge, beliefs, barriers, social circumstances and personal goals. Individualized care as a reasoning process.	Compare two fictional patients with the same medical diagnosis and explain why the assessment and nutrition approach may still be different.
14	Learning What to Assess and Why	Food and nutrition related history. Anthropometric information. Biochemical information. Medical history. Medication and supplement history. Clinical symptoms. Lifestyle. Social context. Physical activity. Sleep. Stress. Food access. Health literacy. Patient goals.	Explain why each category of information matters instead of memorizing an assessment form.
15	Connecting the Dots	Relevant information versus background detail. Missing data. Premature conclusions. Pattern recognition. Possible nutrition problems while keeping alternative explanations open.	Work through information rich cases and answer four questions: What do I know? What matters? What is missing? What should I ask next?
16	Red Flags, Assumptions and Referral	Situations where nutrition advice should not be the immediate response. Unexplained weight loss. Severe gastrointestinal symptoms. Significant abnormal findings. Possible eating disorder. Severe weakness. Dehydration. Bleeding. Complex medication concerns. Professional limits and referral.	Work through referral scenarios and explain what can be addressed within nutrition care, what needs further assessment and what needs medical escalation.

Development Outcome: Students move away from disease based shortcuts and begin asking what is actually happening in this individual patient.

MONTH 5: ADVANCED NUTRITION CARE PROCESS, ADIME AND IDNT

Theme: Now learn the professional clinical language.

Purpose: To introduce the complete Nutrition Care Process at an advanced level after students have developed enough scientific understanding and clinical reasoning to use it meaningfully.

Week	Focus	Learning Content	Learning Activity
17	Advanced Nutrition Assessment	Formal NCP assessment structure. Food and nutrition related history. Anthropometric measurements. Biochemical data, medical tests and procedures. Nutrition focused physical findings. Client history. Organizing and interpreting assessment findings clinically.	Convert an earlier informal case assessment into a structured professional nutrition assessment.
18	Nutrition Diagnosis and IDNT Terminology	Medical diagnosis versus nutrition diagnosis. Standardized nutrition diagnosis language. Intake domain. Clinical domain. Behavioral and environmental domain. Selecting the most appropriate diagnosis. Primary and secondary problems. Prioritization.	Compare several possible nutrition diagnoses for one case and defend which diagnosis is best supported by the assessment data.
19	Advanced PES Statement Development	Problem, etiology, signs and symptoms. Logical connection between etiology and problem. Dietitian addressable etiologies where appropriate. Supporting evidence. Clear and defensible PES statements.	Correct weak PES statements by identifying unsupported signs and symptoms, weak etiologies and poor problem etiology relationships.
20	Nutrition Intervention, Monitoring and Evaluation	ADIME as one continuous clinical process. Nutrition prescription. Food and nutrient delivery. Nutrition education. Nutrition counseling. Coordination of care. Monitoring indicators. Reassessment. Linking intervention to diagnosis and monitoring to measurable change.	Complete a linked ADIME exercise in which every intervention and monitoring indicator must be traced back to the nutrition diagnosis.

Development Outcome: Students move from knowing what ADIME stands for to understanding why each step exists and how each step leads logically to the next.

MONTH 6: APPLY EVERYTHING THROUGH REALISTIC CASES

Theme: Think like the dietitian you are becoming.

Purpose: To consolidate nutrition science, evidence appraisal, critical thinking, clinical reasoning and advanced NCP through case based application.

Week	Focus	Learning Content	Learning Activity
21	Nutritional Deficiency Cases	Case based application involving iron deficiency, iron deficiency anemia, vitamin B12, folate and vitamin D concerns. Focus on assessment, nutrition problem, PES statement, intervention and monitoring rather than memorizing supplement protocols.	Complete structured ADIME reasoning for one deficiency case and identify when care coordination or medical follow up is required.
22	Metabolic, Weight and Women's Health Cases	Prediabetes, Type 2 Diabetes, insulin resistance, obesity, undernutrition and PCOS through individualized case reasoning rather than standard disease diets.	Work through cases and justify which information changes the nutrition diagnosis and intervention.
23	Gastrointestinal, Renal and Cardiovascular Cases	Introductory cases involving GERD, IBS, CKD, hypertension, dyslipidemia and liver related nutrition concerns. The aim is structured reasoning across conditions, not specialist mastery.	Compare cases where standard restrictions would be inappropriate and explain what must be assessed before recommending changes.
24	Complete Case Defense	A comprehensive simulated case requiring advanced assessment, nutrition diagnosis, prioritized PES statement, intervention and monitoring and evaluation. Every decision must be justified.	Present the complete case and defend why information was collected, why the diagnosis and etiology were selected, why the intervention was chosen and why specific monitoring indicators were used.

Development Outcome: Students demonstrate that they can think through a nutrition case systematically and justify decisions using clinical rationale rather than imitation.



Final Learning Model

Month	Development Focus	Expected Shift in Thinking
1	Understand nutrition science	From food rules to scientific understanding.
2	Question nutrition information	From repeating claims to evaluating evidence.
3	Understand professional identity	From uncertainty to competence based confidence.
4	Think about the patient clinically	From disease shortcuts to whole patient reasoning.
5	Master advanced NCP, ADIME and IDNT	From memorizing terminology to using one connected clinical process.
6	Apply through cases	From knowing concepts to defending clinical decisions.

Course Philosophy

This course is not designed to give students another collection of notes to memorize.

It is designed to teach them how to understand nutrition, question information, recognize the limits of evidence, think about a patient, and eventually use the professional language of dietetics with confidence.

A strong future dietitian does not need to know everything. They need to know how to think, how to question, how to find reliable answers and how to approach nutrition professionally.